



## **NAVAL STATION INGLESIDE**

**APRIL 15, 2005**

### **USS Pelican selected as Fleet Honoree**

USS Pelican (MHC 53) Sailors are heading to Fort Worth, Texas, to be recognized under the Navy's Fleet Honoree Program. The Fleet Honoree Program was developed to honor a command, ship or squadron upon their merits, and is tied into motor sports and the Navy's #14 racecar.

USS Pelican Sailors will be recognized during the motorcar race being held at Texas Motor Speedway on April 16, with broadcast beginning at about 2 p.m.

Five USS Pelican Sailors will be attending the race: Engineman First Class Petty Officer Bobby Purifoy, Information Systems Technician First Class Petty Officer John Goodson, Quartermaster Second Class Petty Officer Charles Frazier, Storekeeper Second Class Petty Officer Jason Williams, and Damage Controlman Fireman Robert Lawson.

Additionally, "USS Pelican (MHC 53)" will be decalced across the hood of the Dodge Charger #14 Navy racecar driven by David Stremme of FitzBradshaw Racing.

Sailors aboard USS Pelican are MHC Crew Excel -- they most recently were embarked aboard USS Cardinal (MHC 60) while forward deployed to the Arabian Gulf (from August 2004 to February 2005). During Operation Iraqi Freedom, MHC Crew Excel was instrumental in clearing the Iraqi internal waters of mines directly resulting in the opening of the port of Um Quasr. As one of four forward-deployed surface mine countermeasures ships in the Arabian Gulf, these Sailors were responsible for the U.S. Navy mine countermeasures presence in the Arabian Gulf. Crew Excel routinely conducted counter mining surveys while working with coalition partners in the region. From May through June of 2004, MHC Crew Excel participated in Operation Market Time II as the last line of defense for the Iraqi offshore oil pumping station. In August 2004, MHC Crew Excel executed the first Crew Swap of an MHC class ship when the Sailors turned over their ship to another crew and then returned to Ingleside, Texas, to assume custody of USS Pelican (MHC 53).

USS Pelican is the third ship in the Osprey Class of coastal mine hunters, which are the world's largest glass reinforced plastic ships. Pelican's mission is to clear harbor, coastal, and ocean waters of acoustic, magnetic, pressure and contact-type mines, utilizing reconnaissance, classification, and neutralization tactics. The MHC Class design integrates modern mine countermeasures technology into a uniquely designed platform with exceptionally low magnetic signatures to protect against mine detonations during minehunting operations. The ship is homeported at Naval Station Ingleside, Texas.